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Minorities Not Being Properly Protected

Communalism And Fundamentalism Plague All Communities

The latest meeting of the reconstituted National Integration Council was nothing more than a talking shop. Cliches and palliatives were trotted about but no hard decisions were taken. May contend that it was a publicity gimmick by the ruling party.

There was not a single word about protection to the minorities. The 15-point programme, presented at the previous NIC meeting with so much fanfare, has been "nothing short of directive-non-compliance syndrome", as Mr. Chitta Basu of Forward Block put it.

No doubt, there are a number of bodies for redressing grievances of the minorities, namely Central Minority Grievance Committee, Minorities Commission, High-Power Panel, and minority cell attached with the union home ministry. There is no coordination among these bodies, nor have their duties, scopes and functions been identified, causing confusion and overlapping. The minorities commission has no constitutional backing, with the result that all its recommendation find their way into the wastepaper basket. Its chairman has always been a Muslim, and some of them have looked after members of their faith only, ignoring the other minorities.

The latest NIC meet concentrated its attention of fighting "communalism and fundamentalism." But Congress party has been more guilty in several respects. It entered into an alliance with Muslim League in Kerala long ago; this bond still continues. To please Muslims there, its ministry carved out a Muslim-majority district of Malappuram.

The so-called secular Congress(I) has been putting up its candidates in assembly and

parliamentary elections with an eye on the communal and caste composition of each constituency. Nor Mr Gandhi has promised to "try to avoid this communal approach" at the next elections.

But who is going to wait for another three years when Lok Sabha poll will be due?

Mr Rajiv Gandhi pointedly said that communalism had raised its head in Punjab in very virulent form. But he forgot to mention the communal riots which have rocked Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh more ferociously. Against this, there has not been even a single case of Hindu-Sikh riot in Punjab, despite all the

tension there. Terrorism in Punjab has some "secular" phenomenon, as the extremists have killed as many Sikhs as Hindus. Strangely, genuine grievances of the minorities are dubbed as born of communalism while excesses and unsound demands of Hindus are hailed as nationalism.

Fundamentalism is not confined to any one community. (Continued on next page)

Thakkar Report Withheld From President

Some Portions Blast Conspiracy Theory Behind Indira Gandhi's Murder

The central government has not supplied to the president, Giani Zail Singh, a copy of the Thakkar report on Mrs Indira Gandhi's assassination on October 31, 1984, though he has asked for it twice, once in writing:

This is a clear violation of the constitution. Article 78 lays down that "it shall be the duty of the prime minister to furnish such information relating to the administration of the affairs of the union and proposals for legislation as the president may call".

The Thakkar report has, apparently, some portions which are unpalatable to the powers-that-be. It was to keep a firm lid on its findings that the government amended the constitution recently, empowering it to withhold any report of inquiry if it was thought proper in "public interest". Before that, it was obligatory to place such a report before the parliament within six months of its submission.

The Thakkar report has not

come down from the union home minister's level. It has not been sent even to the law ministry which normally processes such reports to find out if any legal action could be taken against officials found guilty of any dereliction of duty and lapses.

It is generally held that the report avers that there was no conspiracy behind Mrs. Gandhi's murder. It was just the work of two of her bodyguards who felt slighted at the desecration of the Golden Temple at her orders in June 1984 when the army invaded the holy complex and demolished the Akal Takht.

If this report is made public, then it would reduce to utter non-sense, almost fabrication, the prosecution story that her murder was the result of a

conspiracy. And Sardars Kehar Singh and Balbir Singh, sentenced to death for having instigated Beant Singh to kill Mrs. Gandhi, shall have to be freed. And the Government's attempts to implicate Sardar Simranjit Singh Mann, a former IPS officer, as the real brain behind the murder would be exposed as a damn lie.

Relations between the Giani and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi have been sour from the very inception. The Giani is now said to be rueing the day when he ignored the time-tested tradition of making the senior-most member of cabinet as acting prime minister till a new incumbent is chosen by the ruling party. May be he wanted to reward the Indira family for having catapulted him to the highest position.

Mr. Gandhi has always to winds the conventional reporting to the president every year. They do meet but only on occasional occasions.

Memorandum Of "Indira Loyalists" A Damp Squib

Opposition To Punjab, Assam And Mizoram Accords Bizarre

The seven-page memorandum submitted to President Giani Zail Singh by a group of expelled or suspended Congress(I) men, led by former Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, on September 16, has not set the Yamuna on fire.

It has not asked for the dismissal of the Rajiv Gandhi government, nor does it contain any specific charges of corruption, malfeasance or maladministration against the prime minister or any union minister. Couched in general terms, it has requested the Giani to fulfil his constitutional obligation of "warning and advising the government" against its present policies which, they alleged, were a departure from those followed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mrs Indira Gandhi.

(Continued from front page)

Akalis are accused of using gurdwaras for political harangues. But Imams also give political colouration to their discourses at Friday prayers meetings. RSS cadres, Shiv Senas and a host of other militant Hindu organisations are based in temples which have been used blatantly for whipping up passions against other communities. In Punjab, often places of worship have been used by Hindu to fire at neighbouring Sikh houses.

No religion preaches hatred of others. It is only the pandits, mullahs and granthies who are villains of the piece.

BJP, self-appointed champion of Hindu causes, has taken exception to recruitment of more Muslims into the central police organisations. It argues that such a community-wise step would lead to factionalism and spell the doom of national unity and integration. But, at the same time, this party insists on giving Punjab Hindus 48 percent representation, on the basis of their population ratio, in the state police. BJP has double standards.

Sikhs were 33 percent in the army in 1947. Now their share has been reduced to five percent. Plans are afoot to cut it down further to two percent in keeping with their population in the country. Akalis demand that we must not temper with the defence forces and recruitment must be only basis of merit and not population ratio. And yet this secular and nationalistic demand is decried as communal.

These "Indira loyalists" argue that the government has softened its anti-imperialist attitude. It was also drifting toward the right in fiscal and economic policies at home. According to them, traditional emphasis on socialism has been diluted and liberalisation and privatisation have been ushered in without regard to the consequences.

But these wise men have not bothered to realise that public sector undertakings, with only a handful of honourable exceptions, have been always in the red and have become dens of corruption, inefficiency and lethargy. Against this, private sector has been doing very well. Some men are against the laissez faire doctrine simply because they cannot wield their clout in it.

Most bizarre has been the opposition of these "Indira men" to the Punjab, Assam and Mizoram accords. Their contention is that these have given stimulus to "secessionist and divisive forces". How, they have not bothered to explain. All these three agreements have defused the turbulent situation in the three states and paved the way for communal harmony and peace. If the unrest still continues in Punjab and Assam, it is merely due to the non-implementation of the accords.

Mr Mukherjee would do well to cast a look within his own state. West Bengal. There the

Gorkhaland movement has gained strength because the Indians of Nepali origin have been given a raw deal. He would be better advised to set his own house in order first before casting venomous arrows at others.

Giani Zail Singh has promised to give the memorandum full consideration. More than this, he could not do. But it was premature on part of some Congress(I) members of parliament to have rushed into the fray prematurely and accused the Giani of impropriety in agreeing to receive the delegation. The President belongs to the nation and not to the ruling party alone.

Punjab seeking share in power projects

The Punjab government is taking all possible steps to press upon the union government to give the state its due share in the power generated from the Sangrauli and Herasur projects. In this respect leaders of various parties in the Lok Sabha are also being approached.

This was stated by Dr. Harbhajan Singh Deol, administrative member of the Punjab State Electricity Board in Moga last week. Dr. Deol criticised the authorities of these power projects for not granting Punjab its due share even in the hour of crisis.

He, however, expressed satisfaction over the performance of the Guru Nanak Thermal Plant, Bhatinda. He said that all preliminary steps have been taken to set up a new project of power generation from rice husk in Patiala district.



24th September, 1955

JAN SANGH A MENACE TO THE PEACE & TRANQUILITY OF PUNJAB

Government Must Crush Their
Fascist Tendencies with
Strong Hand

(By Our Staff Correspondent)

The activities of the Jan Sangh and Maha Punjabis in the Punjab have indeed become a matter of great concern and pose a problem which demands the strictest watch and control. The more this goondaism is condemned, the lesser it is.

No sooner the Religious Formula was evolved than these communal organisations have been agitating and making a hue and cry over nothing. These communal outbursts should not be ignored and brushed aside lightly but they should be taken note of seriously. They are a challenge to the peace and tranquillity of the Punjab and the fascist tendencies of the Jan Sangh are injurious to the healthy growth of the Parliamentary Democracy. The whole atmosphere of the Punjab and Pepsu is charged with distrust and communal tension and Jan Sangh is obviously the author of this hooliganism and is totally responsible for creating this state of affairs. No doubt that many persons having vested interests are backing these bodies.

The Punjab Government has done good in banning the entry of Jan Sangh Chief into Amritsar. The hooligans wanted to repeat the Hoshiarpur story here too. Have the people forgotten the violent demonstrations of the Maha Punjab hooligans on the morning of September 8, against Shirman Narayan, Congress General Secretary? No, they have not! The looting of shops, throwing of bottles and brickbats shows the bankruptcy of the communal parties. What does it lead to—spread of communal tension in other parts of India. The Arya Samajists of Jullundur are already infamous for their communalism and if they get little support, they do not desist from making a mountain of a mole-hill. During the British Raj they were rank opportunists and now no wonder, if they are arrayed against the National Flag and all that it stands for.

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A THOUGHT FROM GURBANI

Nam is the only thing worthy of praise,
Without Nam we are naught;
Wordly position and wealth are but fleeting thing;
They come and go.

—Guru Amardas

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Equitable Compensation

Barnala ministry in Punjab has taken the most welcome decision of giving to families of the victims of terrorist violence in the state the same facilities of relief and rehabilitation which have been admissible to victims of anti-Sikh riots of November 1984. In this way, it has dispelled the impression among Hindus that the government was more responsive to the needs of the Sikhs alone, though the terrorists have been killing Hindus and Sikhs in almost equal numbers:

Now families affected by extremist violence and terrorism will be entitled to preferential loans and subsidies, free education for children, a monthly pension of Rs. 250 per month for each widow, and priority in allotment of houses and residential plots. So far the compensation for lives lost in terrorist violence was an ex-gratia grant of Rs. 20,000 each and a Class III or IV government job to one dependent relative of each victim. There are about 1,000 families of this genre. The new concessions should be applauded as a new initiative for the state's peace and amity.

The initial reactions have been favourable. Several dozen Hindu families, who had migrated, are now returning to Punjab. This influx can be increased if the Hindu militants stop their vicious propaganda and assure the members of their community that their life and property are safe. Punjab police, in cooperation with para-military forces, have now got the upper hand against the terrorists, and acts of violence have been considerably reduced.

There is another piece of good tidings. The central government has decided to give an enhanced compensation to residents of the area around the Golden Temple, who suffered losses during Operation Bluestar in June 1984. The area was traditionally a busy trading centre: Hundreds of shops were razed to the ground and traders left almost penniless.

However, New Delhi has not agreed to the traders' plea that their insurance claims be fully sanctioned. Union Finance Minister V.P. Singh has cited "technical difficulties" as an alibi. But why cannot these be ironed out on compassionate grounds? After all, the problem is more human than mere technical. Or should we assume that the centre is impervious to the miseries of the people who were victims of its own military operations?

ASA - DI - WAR

By : A.C. Arora

Asa di var is a unique and thought-provoking ballad composed by Guru Nanak in the then prevalent Punjabi language. It has a strikingly simple and spontaneous, sarcastic yet soothing style. It consists of 24 *pauris* and 60 *Shlokas* (including 14 *Shlokas* of Guru Angad). According to Teja Singh, "the whole is very artistically arranged and in the method, sequence and coherence of thought it is as perfect as the *Japji*". The main theme of *Asa di var* is obviously 'God, man and Guru'. In almost all the *Pauris* the author pays glowing tributes to the infinite, immeasurable and all-pervading Greatness and Glory of God. He also lays considerable emphasis upon the need of a spiritual guide or Guru without whom a man, he holds, will be like spurious sesame left desolate in the field. The way of religion advocated and preached by Guru Nanak is, however, not an amalgam of set-views or doctrines but a way of life. And as such the author felt very much concerned about the socio-religious lives which the people of that age were leading. Hence in his *Asa di var*, and more particularly in the *Shlokas* attached to every *Pauri*, he gives numerous references, direct, regarding the conditions of that society.

Religion with all its false, formal and superstitious practices, it appears, was the most dominant force in that medieval society as depicted in *Asa di var*. A man in that society was nothing if he was not a Hindu or a Mussalman and both Hinduism and Islam had assumed most perverted forms at the time. The Brahmins and the Mullahs who were regarded as shepherds of their respective flocks—and actually they did nothing more than to remove the fleece of the sheep of their flocks—had imposed most taxing and vexatious ceremonies upon the innocent and ignorant masses, so that individual liberty had virtually ceased to exist. Instead of liberating the soul of the people—the solemn and sacred task they had been entrusted with—they had really made them slaves, both mentally and spiritually. "Man", says Rousseau "is born free but every-where he is in chains". In the society under discussion man was not even born free and he was bound heart and soul by the chains of religion, family and state. Even the restrictions imposed upon the man by the Sultans and the aged heads of the family were more often than not, dictated by their religious fanaticism and fads.

And so it came to pass that religious tyranny reigned in that society. Right from his birth down to his death, an individual had been over-burdened with numerous so called religious ceremonies. According to K.M. Ashraf, "Religious emotion found its best expression in them. Society even judged of the responsibility of a person by the amount of care and attention he gave to the fulfilment of these social and religious rites". The birth ceremony of a child, especially a male child, was celebrated with great enthusiasm. Guru Nanak alludes to the peculiar practices of impurity the so-called 'Sutak' associated with the birth of a child. All the family members, even the caste-fellows were regarded as impure, so that their very touch was supposed to defile all the cooked food. Guru Nanak strongly condemns this futile superstitious practice. He writes :

If we admit the idea of impurity (Sutak), impurity will be found in everything.

There are worms in dung and wood,

There is no grain of corn without life;

Water is the primary element of life, by which everything is made fresh and green.

How can we keep away this impurity?

It will enter into our kitchen, Nanak, we can remove impurity only by true knowledge.

Then he goes on to say that the real impurities consist in greed, lying, lust and slander which defile the heart, tongue eyes and ears respectively and lead a man to hell.

After passing through various ceremonies in early childhood, whereas a Muslim child was circumcised at the age of seven, a Hindu child belonging to the three upper castes proclaimed his boyhood by wearing a sacred thread (usually at the completion of nine years) in a traditional ceremonial manner. Guru Nanak who attaches no religious sanctity and importance to this ceremony, exposes its hollowness and at the same time dilates upon the real significance of moral virtues of eternal value, such as mercy, contentment, truth and self-control in these lines :

Make the thread of contentment from the cotton of mercy by giving it twists of truth and ties of self control.

The sacred thread thus formed will be for the soul.
If thou hast it, o 'pandit' put it on me.

It will not break, or become soiled, or be burnt, or lost.
Blessed is the man, o 'Nanak', who goeth with such a thread around his neck.

He also mentions how on the eve of this ceremony a goat is slaughtered, cooked and eaten and then everybody present saith, 'put on the Janeu'.

We do not find any reference regarding marriage ceremonies in *Asa di var*. But we learn from other sources that "all sorts of sober and humorous rites and numerous superstitious ceremonies filled the programme of the bride and the bridegroom". Likewise many superstitious rites were performed before and after the death of a person. For a few days following death, the house was considered to be ceremonially impure. The Hindus burnt the dead bodies whereas the Mussalmans buried them. In one passage of *Asa di var* Guru Nanak talks about the futile but much pronounced difference between the Hindus and Muslims regarding the disposal of their dead bodies. He says:

The clay of a Mussalman finds its way into the potters' hand,

Who fashions vessels and bricks out of it. It cries out of fire;

And as it burns, poor thing, it weeps and sheds and tears of cinders.

Nanak, only the Creator who made the world knoweth whether cremation is better or burial.

That is to say that it is simply vain and whimsical on the part of the Mussalmans to find fault with the Hindu practice of burning the dead bodies, for the Muslim dead bodies which are buried may be dug out by the potter and put into the fire of his oven.

But the religious ceremonies did not end with the end of a man. Year after year following the death of a person, his descendants in the Hindu family performed the *Shradh* ceremony dedicated to the deceased. While preaching honest earning, the Guru in one interesting *Shloka* refers to this ceremony with characteristic humour and sarcasm:

If a robber robs a house and offers

the proceeds of his theft to his departed ancestors,

The property will be recognized in the next-world and will bring the charge of theft on the ancestors.

Justice will require that the hands of the intermediary Brahmin be cut off.

Nanak we get hereafter only what we give out of our own hard-earned substance.

In this way the whole life of individual—that of a Hindu in a greater degree—was overburdened with innumerable rites which, to Nanak, had more superstition than sense in them. Yet the self-styled protectors of Hinduism and Islam, the Brahmins and Mullahs, professedly attached religious sanctity to all these ceremonies.

It was the *Kal-Jug* in which there was, as it was bound to be, degeneration and deterioration all round in the moral level of the people. The Master refers to the prevalent tradition 'four jugs' pointing out how the *Kal-Jug* differed from the preceding jugs.

In the *Sat-Jug*, contentment was the chariot (of human life) and piety the driver in front.

In the *Treta-Jug*, temperance was the chariot and strength the driver in front.

In the *Duapra-Jug*, penance was the chariot and Truth the driver in front.

In the *Kal-Jug*, flaming passion is the chariot and falsehood the driver in front.

In this *Kal-Jug* the people had forgotten the substance of religion. As Guru Nanak writes in *Majh Di Var*, "Religion has taken wings and vanished. Falsity prevails like the darkness of the darkest night. The moon of truth is visible no where". The darkness of the age had made goblins of men. The seed of religion had exhausted its merit with the departure of those who had sown it. False and formal practices were all that was left of religion. In the language of Sewa Ram Singh, "Both the systems (Hinduism and Muhammadanism) had degraded into sets of formalities and ceremonies, which were performed by their votaries like mere automats. Their objects were no longer understood or sought to be understood... while each pretended to be righteous, religious and pious, neither understood the spirit of religion. Hindu had ceased to be Hindu, whom Krishna of the *Bhagwat Gita* would not care to own, and Muhammadan had ceased to be Muhammadan, whom Muhammad himself, if he had somehow reappeared on earth, would have failed to recognize as his follower." The Master himself had uttered these significant words, the very first words with which he started delivering his message: "There is no Hindu and no Muslim." Leaving aside

the fundamental principles of their religion such as sincere devotion to God and self-surrender before his Supreme Will, the Hindus would go to and bathe at the sacred places, worship images, offer oblations and burn incense before them. Guru Nanak alludes to sixty-eight sacred places of the Hindus. Apart from this, the Hindus, he writes, would repeat the Gayatri three times a day, wear rosaries around their necks, put sacrificial marks on their foreheads and carry a pair of 'dhotis' along with towels on their heads. They would read their sacred books for all the months and the years. Instead of worshipping one Fearless and Formless God, they worshipped Krishna and Rama. There were numerous tales about Krishna and Rama popular in those days and *Krishn-Lilas* and *Ram-Lilas* were commonly performed. It had become a profession with many people to earn their livelihood by such stage performances. Guru Nanak gives a graphic description of these funny and profane performances in these lines:—

The Gurus dance to the tune set by their disciples;

They move about their feet and shake their heads;

The dust rises and falls on their ruffled hair;

The audience seeing all this laugh and go home;

For the sake of the bread the performers move to the rhythmic throb or music;

or dash themselves on the ground,

And sing as the Krishnas and the milkmaids

or as Sitas and the royal Ramas.

Like the Hindus, the Muslims also had recourse to formal and futile practices which had supplanted the real tenets of Islam. They extolled their sacred law (Shariat) and constantly read and speculated upon it. They read the *Nimaz* (five times a day) in the mosques and did all sorts of atrocious deeds. They wore blue dresses and performed pilgrimage to Mecca. They often ran to dead and living saints for the fulfilment of their desires and believed in miracles and magic. The Muslim Qazis counted beads of rosary and worshipped God, yet they accepted bribes and passed unjust orders. Guru Nanak is said to have addressed the Mussalmans elsewhere in these words:

Make kindness thy mosque, sincerity thy prayer-carpet,

What is just and lawful thy Quran,

Modesty thy circumcision, civility thy fasting,

Make right conduct thy Kaaba, truth thy spiritual guide,

Good works thy creed and thy prayer

The will of God thy rosary, and God

will preserve thine honour, O Nanak."

Thus both the Hindus and Mussalmans had gone astray from the genuine path of religion and had fallen in the ditches of ignorance superstition and falsehood.

A special mention may here be made of the caste system which was then, as ever before and after, the distinguishing characteristic of Hindu society. According to this system the Hindu society was divided into four main castes—the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras—each having a large number of sub-castes. Of all these, the Brahmins were regarded as the most superior and privileged class. With the advent of Islam the position of Brahmins in the Indian society had, of course, received a set back, yet they were still looked upon as the acknowledged leaders of Hinduism. They had, however, abandoned those intrinsic virtues which their class originally stood for, and had themselves fallen a prey to all the vices which they were expected to combat in the community and had had only external marks of holiness left in them. They would dispense sacred thread to the people, perform their marriages by getting commissions, show them the path for the future on the basis of 'Patri' or scroll and, though blind in soul, call themselves seers. They would go to the houses of other people, sound conchs and enjoy their food. Next to the Brahmins were the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas who had become covetous and cowardly, and earned their livelihood by dishonest means. Guru Nanak strongly denounces the hypocrisy prevalent among these cowardly and caste-conscious high caste Hindus in one significant passage which may be quoted as a whole:

They have sacred marks (*Tilak*) on their forehead peculiar dhotis around their waist;

They have daggers in their hands and act as world's butchers;

They wear blue clothes in order to be acceptable to the ruling class;

They earn their living from those whom they call *Malechhas*, yet they allow no one to enter their cooking squares;

Having smeared a place for cooking purpose they draw lines around it;

And sitting within, false as they are, they say:

(Continued on page 10)

Punjab waits for the nation's Promised healing touch

At the last meeting of the Standing Committee of the Council, useful discussions were held on the problems of the minority communities in the country. Punjab holds a very unique position in the minorities issue as the local minority there happens to be the national majority. This often produces a complex psychological brew and an inter-mix of social, political and administrative problems. Remarkably, however the state has by and large remained free from the kind of communal eruptions that have been witnessed in other parts of the country.

But there is another aspect of the problem which, I believe, deserves notice. Often in the past, we have tended to multiply the threat to our national unity by a nervous over-reaction even to negligible voices of irrationality. We as a nation need to act with far more self assurance than we have done in the past. We must accept that many of the problems that we face today are an inevitable part of the nation's process of growing up. These could be described as 'teething troubles' of free India and I am sure we will be able to sort them out. But we would need to re-activate our traditional national virtues of tolerance, social accommodation and the ability to look beyond tomorrow.

Understandably Punjab has become the acid test for the nation's ability to sort out the minority-majority syndrome. At our meeting on April 7 a near national consensus was reached on what constitutes the Punjab problem and what should be done to solve it. A very kind nation had assured me of all help in combating the threat to our national unity. While all peace loving people in Punjab would welcome such help, there are considerable differences of opinion on what really constitutes it. The nature of this help would quite naturally depend on how we perceive the problem in the first place.

It would be generally conceded that the problem in Punjab is only a powerful symptom of a disease that afflicts the whole nation. Fissiparous trends are visible almost all over the country. In fact, the problem has existed for well over two decades now, since the rise of the separatist stir in Tamil Nadu. The nation handled the threat with admirable cool and self-assurance at that time. Later,

Addressing the National Integration Council (NIC) in New Delhi last week, Punjab Chief Minister Surjit Singh Barnala said, "the causes of social and political tension in the state be removed".

"The memorandum of settlement on Punjab still awaits the nation's attention", he said, apparently referring to the delay in solving the territorial and water issues.

He said, that the situation in the state marked a crucial turning point and "the tables can be turned with an act of political will and daring".

Expressing satisfaction over the way the law-enforcing agencies in Punjab had tackled the terrorist problem, the Chief Minister said that "the political nature of the Punjab problem should not be lost sight of while extending help to the state to strengthen law and order".

Sardar Barnala said there should be no panic at the fissiparous trends witnessed in the state because it was only a symptom of the disease afflicting the entire nation.

He recalled how the rise of a separatist stir in Tamil Nadu two decades ago was handled with admirable cool and self-assurance. But now it appeared there was a tendency to become panicky in the face of such routine problems. He regretted that a simple political problem in Punjab had been allowed to become a major national and human crisis.

Sardar Barnala said that Punjab, understandably had become the acid test for the nation's ability to sort out the minority-majority syndrome. He was glad that migration from Punjab had been not only contained but partly reversed with the improved situation.

However, the continuing migration into Punjab, if not checked, would add to the existing social tension in the state. "This problem should be treated on the same war footing as the fight against the terrorists", he said.

The following is the text of Sardar Barnala's speech.

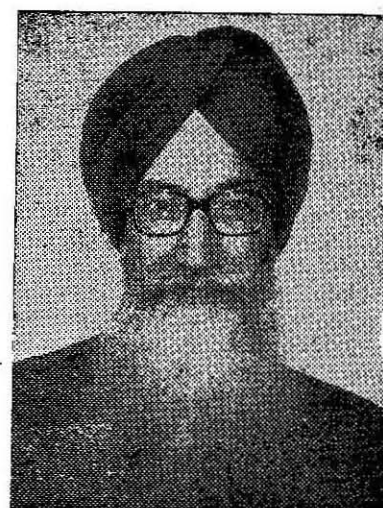
however, we have tended to become more and more panicky even in the face of routine problems. The Punjab problem is a case in point where a very simple political problem has been allowed to become a major national and human crisis.

We have consistently maintained that the problem in Punjab is basically a political one, which has gradually assumed a law and order dimension. The State Government has addressed itself to tackling the law and order side of the issue in all earnestness. In fact, we have subordinated everything else to our efforts to restore peace in the State. Our drive against those indulging in violence has yielded results that even our detractors have had to acknowledge. Three of the five dreaded gangs of terrorists have been busted. The police is hot on the heels of the remaining two. In the past few weeks, a majority of the hardcore terrorist leaders have either been arrested or killed and their hide-outs smashed. Over the past two months, there has been only one major terrorist strike in the

State, at Muktsar on July 25. Even there, the police has not only arrested the main culprits of that carnage but have also solved many other major terrorist crimes.

I can say with some confidence that our law-enforcing machinery has tackled a very serious situation with an admirable degree of foresight, alacrity and efficiency. They have successfully provided the nation with a welcome reprieve in which it should be possible for us to move against the problem with a sustained political initiative. This moment in my State represents a crucial turning point and the tables can be turned on the disruptive and anti-national elements with act of political will and daring. We must utilise this breathing space provided by the police to operate politically so that the gains of our drive against the terrorists could be consolidated and an enduring solution found.

The pressure against the terrorists will be kept up relentlessly and peace in the State



Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala

ensured at all costs. No one can rule out the occurrence of stray incidents any where in the country but the general law and order situation in my State is well under control now and the pace of improvement will be maintained. With the situation improving by the day, we have also contained and even partly reversed, the process of migration from the State.

It is now that the nation can truly help in restoring peace and calm in the region. The causes of social and political tension in the State must be removed. The Memorandum of Settlement on Punjab still awaits the nation's attention. The spirit in which it was signed must be revived and reactivated, for the Accord is a statement of our nation's will to solve political problems through political means.

We are also facing another serious problem in the State. The process of migration into the State is continuing and will soon assume alarming proportions if steps are not taken to ensure a sense of safety and security to members of the minority community throughout the country. Each migrant to Punjab adds to the existing social tension in the State. This problem must be treated on much the same war footing on which we are fighting terrorism in Punjab.

I wish to assure you that we are about to turn a new leaf in our State. This is a crucial moment that must be seized in order to end the problem once and for all. The nation is on the threshold of an opportunity in Punjab and the occasion is there, asking us to rise to it. Our political vision, sagacity and patriotism are at stake. I am sure the nation would not be found wanting in will and courage. Political complacency can have implications far more dangerous than administrative complacency. Punjab waits for the nation's promised healing touch.

Wrong Place and Time for Army

By ; B.K. Tripathy, I.P.S. (Retd.)

A controversy has arisen regarding the desirability of deploying the army to deal with the present situation in Punjab. The State's Chief Minister has opposed the idea while the BJP continues to press the demand. These necessarily reflect the two opposing points of view held by the public in Punjab. Lt. Gen. S.K. Sinha quoted Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala as saying, "The trouble with the army is that they only know how to kill, and that means trouble". Jyoti Jafa's article in The Statesman (August 19-20) voices similar concern when it says "The army has no means except the use of overwhelming force to meet separatism, extremist and terrorist attacks".

Deployment of the army in a particular situation depends on various factors and no rule of thumb can be applied to it. To say that if the army could be called in to deal with communal violence in Ahmedabad, it should also be relied upon to deal with terrorist violence in Punjab is to apply the rule of thumb. Communal violence usually erupts suddenly and lasts for a short period. Terrorism or insurgency builds up slowly, and is a long-lasting phenomenon. The army, or even the police, can quell communal violence in a couple of days. But even the best efforts of the army may fail to eliminate terrorism or insurgency in a couple of decades.

It is, of course, agreed that in an insurgency situation there may be no alternative except to call in the army. The Government rightly used the army in such situations in Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur. But these were insurgency situations, Punjab's is not. One must make a clear distinction between insurgency and terrorist activities, so as to avoid committing a mistake while deciding upon counter-measures.

Punjab is not facing a revolutionary or insurgency situation: there is no immediate danger of extremists overtaking the police and para-military forces. In fact, the tempo of terrorist activities is going down, although slowly, and the momentum of the action taken by the police and para-military forces is on the rise. Of late, the terrorists are going in for "sensational" killings—an inevitable stage in the stagnant or declining phase of terrorism anywhere in the world. The best way to face this phase of terrorism is to tighten security measures wherever needed, and by

relentless pursuit of the terrorists as is being done now.

Secondly, if the army is called in now, can it eradicate terrorism completely? Judging by army's performance in the past, the chances are that terrorism in Punjab may continue for years, just as low key insurgency goes on in Nagaland and Manipur in spite of the heavy deployment of the army for nearly 30 years. Is the Government prepared to allow the army to get bogged down in Punjab for a long period?

The fear that induction of the army may not have any perceptible impact on Punjab is based on facts. After Operation Bluestar there was a lull in terrorist activities for a month or so. But from

for six months (from May to October 1984). All the BSF units on the Punjab border were placed under army command. Moreover, out of the 10 sectors on the Punjab border one was guarded entirely by army personnel replacing the BSF. The results were as bad or as good as they always have been. The border was far from sealed. Rather, terrorist movement across the international boundary increased even in the sector guarded by the army.

The other suggestion that more force should be deployed is valid to some extent. If the present strength is doubled, it may go a long way in preventing trans-border crimes but cannot seal the border. Land borders anywhere in the world by their

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mid-July 1984 the remaining terrorists regrouped and their depredations continued unabated for the rest of 1984 even though army units were stationed all over the State till October-November that year. In Gurdaspur alone as many as 33 such incidents took place during this period. Amritsar district also continued to be disturbed. One must not gloss over these incidents. On the night of August 14-15, 1984 terrorists managed to set fire to seven school buildings in different areas proving that their set-up was still effective. Again on September 12, 1984 terrorists stopped a bus near Chhina village in Gurdaspur division and killed eight Hindu passengers. All this happened despite an unusually large military presence.

General Sinha claims, that the border can be effectively sealed by the army. To achieve this objective he suggests three methods: BSF jawans on the Punjab border be placed under the army; the army itself deploy additional force on the border; and certain border villages be evacuated. The first of these methods was, in fact tried out

very nature, do not lend themselves to sealing only by manpower deployment.

The third suggestion regarding evacuation of certain border villages is rather vague. Will it be a kilometre or five from the "zero" line? How many villages will be affected? What will be the total population involved? What about their rehabilitation and resettlement? In Punjab we are talking about a border that is nearly 450 km long and heavily populated, especially in the Manjha area. All along the border, land is cultivated right up to the "zero" line.

Thus, none of the hopes regarding the army's supposedly magical powers appear to be well founded. We will be doing a disservice to the army by putting it at the wrong place at the wrong time. The army's prestige may suffer if it gets bogged down in skirmishes with elusive terrorists. Further, the danger of alienating the public which Pran Luthra speaks of in his articles in The Statesman (July 15-16) is real as this happened in Punjab during 1984.

General Sinha has claimed that, if called in, the army will "cooperate" with the State Government but will not be under its "control". Then under whose control will it be? At another place he says the army will "assist" the State Government and "cooperate" with the police and para-military forces. Assistance means subordination and cooperation means equal sharing and not the "under command" system to which army is accustomed. All this is rather confusing.

The clear legal position is this: whenever the army is called out for internal security duties, it comes in aid of 'civil power' under appropriate sections of the Criminal Procedure Code. Civil power in a State is the State Government which functions through the Cabinet in normal times and through the Governor during President's rule. At the district level, civil power is represented by the district magistrate or deputy commissioner. The army or any other force which goes to the aid of civil power remains always under its "control" and has to take orders from it.

Other System

This country fortunately knows of no other system. As General Sinha himself admits, the concept of Martial Law does not exist in our legal system. The Justice Raghubar Dayal Commission of 1967 went into this matter in detail. It stated that it is a practice with the army to demand "control" of operation and from areas to be "handed over" to it. Justice Dayal stated such practices have no legal basis, and was highly critical of such unconstitutional actions.

In spite of this legal restriction the civil authorities in Punjab went out of the way during 1984 to submit to army demands to make it easier for the army to perform its role. This was a case of "voluntary self-negation" of civil power. One cannot expect this to happen repeatedly. The army has to function within the existing legal system and remain under the control of the State Government.

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The mushroom growth of private armies raised by religious fanatics has begun to tell on the Capital's peace. They operate branches from dingy rooms in resettlement colonies, small shops in markets and offices close to places of worship. In a recent report, the special branch of the Delhi police expressed serious concern over the growth of such Senas. Their membership varies from a handful of active people to a few thousands.

"Our morale is very high and the response of Hindus very encouraging," says Mr Virendra Sharma, 43, national president of the Hindu Shakti Sena, one of the largest.

Like the rest, this Sena owes its birth to the events in Punjab. It was in the aftermath of the riots in November, 1984 that its membership began to swell.

Mr Sharma, who runs a lottery business at the Tis Hazari courts, operates from a shop in Krishna Nagar, a trans Jamuna colony of lower middle class Hindus, mostly Punjabi refugees. A life-size painting of Indira Gandhi is displayed prominently on a wall. Newly acquired furniture, including the swivel chair on which Mr Sharma sits, suggests a new-found prosperity. A huge trident which loyal workers polish every day to keep it shining has been affixed outside the main door of the office which opens on to the narrow pavement.

An unending stream of visitors, mainly young men from nearby colonies and UP towns across the border, keeps pouring in with requests for tridents, membership forms and Mr Sharma's presence at forthcoming ceremonies of *Trishul dharan* (the formal ceremony for acceptance of tridents by active workers).

Mr Sharma is reverently called *Pradhanji*. Four active members accompany him all the time on his outside visits.

"I do not travel alone now", he says. "The number of threatening letters has increased. My volunteers take to provide me protection. I have applied for a revolver licence".

Twirling his mustache, Mr Sharma says that his organisation is against any type of donation. "An active member has to pay Rs 51 at the time of initiation when he takes an oath to protect the Hindu religion and Bharat-varsha. He is given a trishul, an identity card, a saffron cap and a belt".

Mr Sharma has in the past served a 12-year term for murder. "That was committed in a fit of rage during a fight for control of a local club", he says. "Any one can get angry in one's youth. That does not make one a criminal".

Communal Private Armies a Threat to Peace

He also admits that there have been some police cases against him. "The local police registered some cases when our organisation began to gain strength".

Hindu Shakti Sena

The Hindu Shakti Sena, its president said, is not backed by any politician or political party. Asked about rumours that the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mr H.K.L. Bhagat, was behind his organisation, Mr Sharma said:

"I have not met Bhagatji for years. But our organisation can contest elections if the situation so warrants. We will field only staunch Hindus as our candidates".

The Hindu Shakti Sena claims a membership of 15,000 active workers in Delhi and thousands more in nearby towns. "We have covered all the towns from Delhi to Saharanpur," Mr Sharma claimed.

Hindu Parishad

Outside the famous Devi Mandir in Central Delhi's Jhandewalan is the office of the Indraprastha Vishwa Hindu Parishad (IVHP). A former union leader of central government employees, Mr Baikunth Lal Sharma "Prem", is the general secretary of the Indraprastha Vishwa Hindu Parishad. He sits in an inside room the location of which seems to have

been carefully selected. It is closed from all sides and access to Mr Sharma is controlled into a thorough scrutiny of visitors.

The Indrapastha Vishwa Hindu Parishad has a youth wing—Bajrang Dal—which is run under 25-year-old Pradeep Kumar who deals in diaries and other novelties for a living.

The Bajrang Dal, Mr Sharma says, was raised to make young Hindus realise the virtues of their religion. "Our volunteers are given extensive training in wrestling and body-building. Why should people get disturbed if my boys sweat it out in an akhara. We are not indulging in senseless killings. We are only strengthening our self-defence so that we can protect our religion, nation and country".

Presently the Indraprastha Vishwa Hindu Parishad is engaged in rehabilitation of Hindu migrants from Punjab. It also tries to prevent Hindu girls from marrying men of other religions.

There are other groups, like the Hindu Shiv Shakti Dal which operates from a temple in Tilak Nagar the scene of violent clashes. The Hindu Shiv Sena has been raised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and operates from the Karol Bagh area in West Delhi. And there is Balraj Madhok's Hindustan Hindu Manch also.

The literature and posters brought out by these organisa-

tions have only one target—Hindu youth.

To counter the growth of Senas, raised with the support and ideological backing of Hindu leaders, the Naib Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid, Syed Ahmed Bukhari, has taken the lead by organising Adam Sena. He functions from an office in the Jama Masjid complex. Handsome and articulate, Ahmed Bukhari is the son of the Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid, Syed Abdullah Bukhari.

"The need for Adam Sena", the Naib Imam says, "was felt when Muslim youth began to lose faith in the old Muslim leadership. No one is bothered about the growing unemployment and other problems of the Muslim youth".

He says the Shahi Imam had blessed the Adam Sena on the condition that it would remain non-violent and work for the oppressed. "We will fight against all those who try to suppress the minorities whether they be Sikhs in Delhi or Hindus in Punjab." Ahmad Bukhari says, "But the Government must take immediate steps to check the activities of these trishuldharis".

The Naib Imam says that the Adam Sena had a membership running into thousands, including about 100 Harijans and Sikhs. He said he would soon undertake an all "India tour to organise the Adam Sena at a national level.

Police reports, however, indicate that despite all the rhetoric about communal harmony and peace, these Senas have resulted in the creation of an atmosphere of confrontation. There are also reports about an Ali Sena being organised by one Javed of Meerut who has declared that its members will carry long swords.

(Courtesy—Indian Express)

General Aurora Feted

Organised by Amity Club of Delhi citizens and compered by Sardar Harbhajan Singh Rattan a reception was accorded to the Bangla Desh fame General Jagjit Singh Aurora on his election as Member Parliament (Rajya Sabha), at Constitution Club New Delhi. The function was presided over by Justice Ranjit Singh Narula and addressed by persons like Shri I.K. Gujral, Dr. Maheep Singh, Sardar Gurdit Singh Jolly. Earlier Sardar Mehtab Singh Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the chief guest and the audience.

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Barnala urges Centre to implement Punjab Accord

The Punjab chief minister, Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala who is on a good will mission to other states visited Jaipur for 2 days on September 13 and 14 and told newsmen that unless the Centre took "bold action and avoided 'hair-splitting' over minor issues, hurdles in the implementation of the accord would continue.

Sardar Barnala, however, refused to elaborate what exactly he meant by "bold action".

At a crowded press conference Sardar Barnala said one of the main reasons for the slow pace of implementation was the setting up of too many commissions.

Sardar Barnala clarified that though the setting up of a commission was not outside the purview of the accord, since the Punjab accord was the first of its kind, it was spirit of it that had to be taken into account. He said the late Sant Longowal, when he went to Delhi to sign the accord, had been greatly impressed by the sincerity of the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. Now that one of the signatories—Sant Longowal—was no more, it would greatly boost the image of Mr Gandhi even outside India if the accord was fully implemented.

Sardar Barnala who answered questions on various issues relating to Punjab and Rajasthan, particularly the river waters dispute and the release of water from the three headworks controlled by Punjab, denied allegations that Rajasthan was not being given water from the Harike barrage.

He explained that officials of both the states were posted at the headworks and as such, there was little scope for any state failing to get its due quota. To a question if Punjab was pressing Rajasthan for giving its share of Rs. 30 crores in the construction cost of the Harike barrage, Sardar Barnala said: "I have read something about it in the local papers but I am on a goodwill mission here and not for getting money".

However, he said the issue of Rajasthan's share had not figured during the current visit though it had been discussed at the north zone meeting. He said the amount after adding interest would have come to Rs. 30 crores.

Sardar Barnala clarified that Punjab did not want to forego control over the three headworks. When his attention was drawn to the fact that many years ago, under the Punjab reorganisation Act 1956, these headworks were to be transferred to the Bhakra-Beas Management Board, he said the act in question was itself under dispute.

As for the controversy over the distribution of the Ravi-Beas waters, he said the case was before the tribunal set up under

the inter-state river water disputes Act, 1956. Haryana had given its version before the tribunal and Rajasthan had yet to appear. He said Punjab would abide by the decision of the tribunal.

The Punjab chief minister justified the setting up of a committee of three ministers saying that the versions of the BSF, the army and the local populace differed vastly. He said the anti-Akali Dal forces had got a good handle to criticise the Akali government as they stuck to their stand that persons had been picked up from their villages and killed at the border. When a newsman told him that his action had annoyed the Centre, he said: "It is their outlook".

Additional Forces

Although he seemed, by and large, satisfied with the deployment of additional central forces he said of the 60 companies of the BSF and the CRPF demanded recently, so far only seven companies had been received. In all, at present, 232 companies of the BSF and the CRPF are deployed in Punjab.

Replying to a question as to what India's stand vis-a-vis Pakistan which was giving training to terrorists should be, Sardar Barnala said: "India should not harm its relations with Pakistan but tell it like a friend to halt giving training to terrorists".

About the proposal on the "security belt" he said in the first place, the complete concept of this belt was not yet known. However, he stuck to the Punjab government's opposition to it saying that apart from creating problems for the border population, it would lead to "dual control". He said unlike the desert in Rajasthan, border areas of Punjab had enormous irrigation potential. He said identity cards had been introduced in border areas and all that was needed was strengthening of the BSF network already in operation there.

Sardar Barnala, when asked how he looked to his one-year rule, said: "I can look back happily. We have solved many problems and brought many people into the mainstream. But I won't say fully".

When a newsman told him there was a feeling in some quarters that the Punjab issue was not being solved because of him, Sardar Barnala said: "If the Punjab issue can be solved, I am ready to quit".

Centre asked to declare Amritsar "backward"

Sardar Amarjit Singh, Director of Industries, Punjab, told a meeting of the focal point industrialist allottees in Amritsar last week that the State Government had asked the Central Government to declare district an "A" category backward district in order to give industrialists the full benefit of the latest concessions, like the 25 per cent subsidy, from April, 1985.

The Punjab Government had decided to extend the benefits given to backward districts from April, 1986, onwards. He promised to look into the other

problems of the focal point allottees regarding electric power connections, water supply and allotment of larger plots, besides speeding up formalities like registration.

As regards the exemption of the industrial areas from the ambit of the Land Ceiling Act, the Government would have to approach the Centre as it was a Central law, although he saw no point in continuing its application.

Earlier, several industrialists had listed the problems faced by them.

Convention on Sikh migration

Leaders of the Sikh community in the eastern region will hold a convention on September 28 and 29 at Calcutta to evolve measures to check the migration of Sikhs from the region to Punjab.

The spokesman of a number of Sikh organizations said today that Bihar, U.P. and Madhya Pradesh had been witnessing large-scale migration of members of the community over the past few weeks.

According to them the migration was taking place even from West Bengal which had so far been considered a safe haven for different communities.

Bihar saw an increase in migration after the killing of bus passengers at Muktsar and the disturbances that followed in Delhi.

The proposed convention to be sponsored by the Sikh Co-ordination Committee, would also discuss the fall-out in other States of the delay in implementing the Punjab Accord.

The delegates from different States would suggest to the Punjab Government some measures needed for the security of Sikhs living outside Punjab.

Meanwhile the Sikh Coordination Committee in a resolution asked the Punjab Chief Minister, Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala and Sardar Prakash Singh Badal to settle their differences and restore unity in the Akali Dal in the interest of the panth and Punjab.

GHPS ZONAL TT CHAMPIONS

Guru Harkrishan Public School, Vasant Vihar won the Senior Girls and Senior Boys Table Tennis Titles in the Inter-School Tournament of Zone—South 21. The Senior Girls beat Government Girls Senior Secondary School, R.K. Puram Sector V by 2-0, while their Senior Boys beat Modern School, Vasant Vihar by 2-0.



Letters to the Editor

Respect each others religious sentiments

Sir,—Mr Rajendra Sareen's articles published in The Tribune recently are not only in bad taste, but also full of factual inaccuracies. He has claimed that some Sikh leaders demanded a separate Sikh State at the time of Independence, but neither the British nor the Muslim League entertained the idea. He has not mentioned the name of any Sikh leader who made such a demand.

The only two leaders who negotiated on behalf of the Sikh community at the time of Independence were Master Tara Singh and Sardar Baldev Singh. The former is on record as having refused to have any negotiation with Jinnah. While in London for negotiations, Sardar Baldev Singh once categorically declared that the Sikhs had no separate demand and that they could get whatever they wanted from the Indian leaders after Independence. However, instead of appreciating the gesture, some of my countrymen started dubbing the Akalis as separatists, immediately after Independence.

The slogans of the type mentioned by Sareen were being raised by irresponsible persons from both sides. For his information, the slogans raised by the other side were: *Kangha, Kachh Kara, Kirpan-Inko Bhejo Pakistan*; *"Ora Aira Nahin Parhenge—Gandi Bhasha Nahin Parhenge"*; *"Jaikara-e-Kalyan—Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan"*, etc.

Anybody who is really interested in getting at the root

of turbulence, cannot ignore the facts that certain persons in religious garb created all-round bitterness by hurling personal abuses at the prophets of other religions, including Sikh 'Gurus'; a section of the vernacular Press at Lahore and later at Jalandhar and Delhi, concentrated on spreading hatred among different communities to boost its circulation; a section of the Punjabis made a common cause before Independence with the Muslim League in disowning their mother tongue. After Independence, the Muslims in Pakistan gave up their tirade against the Punjabi language, but some of my countrymen persisted with it, with renewed vigour, often with official patronage, those who denounced the Punjabi language because of its Gurmukhi script, conveniently forgot that their own script had been adopted for the country's national language. While cow slaughter had been banned almost over the country to respect the sentiments of one community, some people could not tolerate a ban on tobacco in a part of only one city to respect the sentiments of another community.

Instead of blaming only one side for the prevailing turbulence, an eminent journalist of the stature of Mr Rajendra Sareen should preach tolerance by calling upon the two sister communities to respect each other's religious sentiments.

—Trilok Singh
Lusaka (Zambia)

Punjab Accord in cold storage

Sir,—Punjab Accord was signed by Sant Longowal at the cost of his own life. Today it lies in 'deep freeze' and may in time simply freeze to death.

There is however, no dearth of lip-sympathy for the Accord. At the function held in village Longowal to mark the first death anniversary of the Sant, Vice President R. Venkataraman went on record to assure the nation that the Punjab Accord can, must and will be honoured. Both Home Minister Buta Singh and Minister of State Ghulam Nabi Azad have spoken in terms of 7 out of the 11 clauses of the Accord having already been implemented. They, however, conveniently forget that by far the most important clause in the Accord related to the transfer of Chandigarh, which has already been postponed thrice: and today nobody would like to predict when and if the transfer will eventually take place. According to our Hon'ble Ministers the remaining 4 clauses (those relating to Chandigarh's transfer, boundary adjustments between the two neighbouring states, distribution of river waters, and the Act to cover all the Sikh shrines throughout the country) concern other states, and therefore their implementation will necessarily take time.

This hypocritical commitment to the Punjab Accord in

word but not in deed can give no comfort or consolation to Punjab, and will certainly deceive no one. The poor Sant Longowal must be turning in his grave at this rank betrayal, and breach of faith. He might well have died in vain.

Repeated postponements of Chandigarh's transfer to Punjab have understandably led to a hardening of attitudes. The Akalis (not all of them extremists) now insist on getting Chandigarh without parting with even an inch of land. Did not Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, they argue, retain their capitals without losing any portion of their territory to the newly-carved linguistic states of Andhra and Gujarat?

What the Vice-President and our Hon'ble Ministers are afraid to say publicly is that the implementation of Accord will have to wait until after the Assembly elections in Haryana scheduled for May 1987. Till then Accord (or whatever has been left of it) must lie in cold storage.

How long can we continue to sacrifice the good of the whole nation at the alter of partisan consideration? And how long can we survive as a nation, if we continue to subordinate the national interest to the interest of the party in power?

—Prabhjot Singh Chopra
Bombay

False propaganda against Punjab

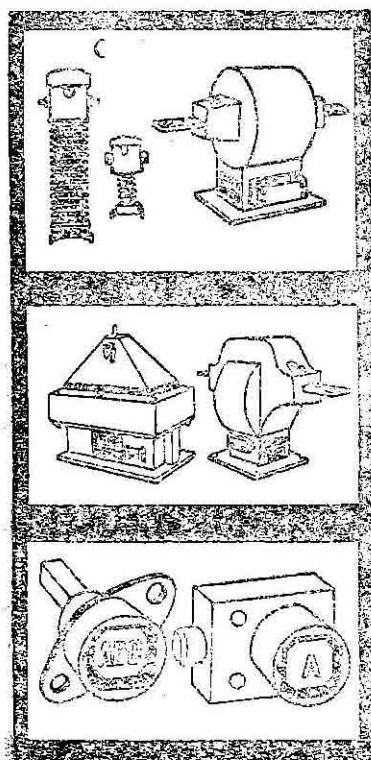
Sir,—Whereas U.P. is the most ill-administered State in Bharat, it on the other hand, leads other States in crime. (Indian Express, 3 Sep 86) From

the crime figures published therein, taken from the Home Ministry, U.P. has "a record number" of murders; 2066 murders in the first four months of the year. This comes to 516.50 murders a month. Similarly, U.P. leads in other various types of crime too. Then come the states of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, all from the Hindi zone.

On the other hand, Punjab had 221 murders in the first three months of the same year, which comes to 73.66 murders a month. Similarly, in other types of crime it is far behind many other states.

Thus it will be seen that most of the crime is committed in the states of Hindi zone, and that in spite of the activities of the "terrorists", the Punjab is comparatively a well behaved state. This should open the eyes of the Bharat Sarkar and the media. But unfortunately, the Congress(I) and the media, mostly controlled by the majority community, are bent upon defaming the Punjab unnecessarily. Punjab, because most of the Sikhs live here.

—Lt.Col. Gulcharan Singh
Jalandhar (Retd.)
sd/



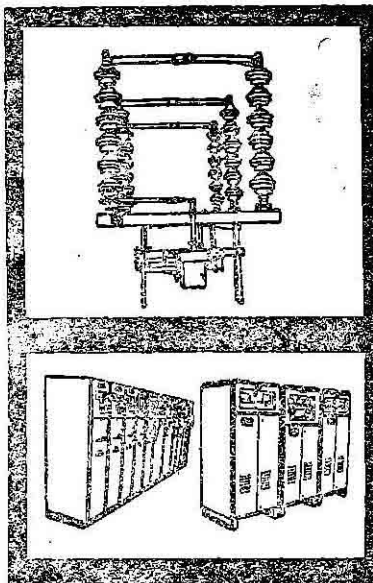
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Political offensive against separatism

An impressive joint public meeting was held at Tarn Taran, by the CPI and the CPM. A powerful political offensive was launched against separatism, extremism, and communalism of all types.

A significant feature of this meeting, perhaps first to be held by any political party after the current spurt of terrorist activities in the area, was that those attending it were almost all Sikhs hailing from various villages of the Tarn Taran sub-division considered to be a stronghold of terrorists.

A veteran CPI leader, Sardar Darbara Singh Canadian, said that the Khalistan slogan was not only anti-Indian but also anti-Sikh. He made a fervent plea for the Hindu-Sikh unity.

Mr. Satyapal Dang, a former MLA of the CPI, said that they would support the Barnala government to the extent it fought terrorism. But at the same time they would oppose its communal policies which only increased the Hindu-Sikh gulf and that helped extremism. He charged that some ministers and police

officers of the Barnala government continued to help the terrorists.

Mr. Dang blamed the Union Government as well as the Haryana and Punjab governments for the non-implementation of the Rajiv-Longowal accord.

Sardar Mohan Singh, a prominent CPM leader, said that death of some innocents, and killings of some extremists in the police custody was not ruled out, and he always opposed such actions but the Badal group was only helping the extremists and the imperialist masters when it bestowed martyrdom on those extremists who actually got killed in encounters. On the other hand, many among the Badal group called even genuine encounters as 'fake', he said.

A Sikh buys Little White House

A Sikh has bought the "Little White House" in Florida (U.S.A.) once used by US President Harry Truman, for \$17.25 million.

Sardar Pritam Singh (33), an American who embraced Sikhism in the 70s, is the new owner of the 100-acre historic site where Mr. Truman spent many "working vacations."

According to a newspaper account, Pritam Singh, born in Massachusetts, as Paul Labombard, once supported himself by diving for shells to sell to tourists. He had made his fortune in real estate in the last six years. He spent five years in a Sikh community but got disenchanted with its leader and moved out 10 years ago.

The prime water front property, which includes the "Little White House", had attracted more than 300 groups of

developers the world over. Bidding began at \$5 million and it took less than an hour for Pritam Singh to make his purchase.

According to the *New York Times*, residents of the area are afraid of the possibility of highrise development. But Sardar Pritam Singh, who specialises in renovating historic structures, has said he plans to "restore everything".

The Truman annexe, as it is known, was a major US naval base until the Navy vacated it in 1974, since water in the area was not deep enough for manoeuvring huge nuclear ships.

Always write your chit number while remitting your subscription or asking for a change in address.

Asa-Di-Var

(Continued from page 4)

'Touch it not, O touch it not',
Or this food of ours will be defiled ;

But their bodies are already defiled with their foul deeds
And their hearts are false even while they perform oblations after their meals ;
Saith Nanak, meditate on the True One,

If thou art pure, thou shalt obtain Him.

Apart from indicating the hypocrisy, cowardice and false sense of purity possessed by the Hindus, the above-quoted lines throw significant light on the cultural commingling of the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Despite the fact that the Hindus contemptuously looked upon the the Muslims as *Malechhas* and the Muslims in turn looked upon the Hindus as infidels or *Kafirs*, there was, it is evident, a certain degree of social intercourse existing between the members of the two communities. As a matter of fact, the Hindus had learnt to accept Muslim rule with all its merits and faults. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Hindus had started taking food and meat prepared in the Muslim fashion and would sometimes wear the typical blue dress of the Mussalmans. All this, thanks to the impact of the Muslim rule, had greatly affected the rigidity of caste system. So the contradictions pointed out by Guru Nanak in the manners of the high caste Hindus may partially be explained by their natural solicitude to preserve the purity of their caste on the one hand and realisation of the reality of Muslim rule on the other. Nor should it be forgotten that the Indian Muslims, too,

had adopted some aspects of the Hindu culture. Influenced by the Hindu caste system, for example, they succumbed to the spirit of class division. They also took active part in the celebration of Hindu festivals such as Holi, Dussehra and Diwali. In the economic field also the Muslims and Hindus worked in co-operation with each other. But the point should not be carried too far. It must be admitted that the social intercourse of the Hindus and Muslims was remarkably limited, for it was not instinctive but forced by the circumstance. The Muslims, right from Sultan Sikandar Lodhi down to a commoner thought in terms of Islam and treated the Hindus as inferior. The Hindus, as a rule, were compelled to pay Jazia with all humiliation and were deprived of high governmental jobs. Even their freedom of worship and performance of religious ceremonies were also sometimes interfered with. On the other hand, the Hindus, conscious as ever of the superiority of their religion and culture and apprehensive of losing the purity of their caste, did not like at heart to mix with the Mussalmans. Under such conditions it was left for a Kabir and a Nanak to launch a four-square attack on the caste pride of the Hindus and to preach social brotherhood of Hindus and Muslims.

Finally, we gather and guess from the study of *Asa di Var* something regarding the position of women in that society. If we believe in Radhakrishnan's dictum, "The position of women in any society is a true index of its cultural and spiritual level," we have then to admit that the society under discussion did not have a high cultural and spiritual

level in this respect also. Both in theory and practice the women had rather an inferior place in the society. The existence of the practices of female infanticide, child marriage, *Pardha*, *Jauhar* and *Sati*, bespeaks of the fact that the lot of women was not a happy one. More significant thing in this connection is that all these practices had been given a religious colouring and, as in every other aspect of society so here also, it was the prevalent superstition rather than the actual religion that caused degradation in the status of women. As K.M. Ashraf remarks, "the social laws and customs stamped her with a sort of mental deficiency." Guru Nanak's spirit revolted against prevalent customs and notions regarding woman. Dilating upon her importance as a mother, a wife and a companion, he pleads for her a respectable status in these lines :

It is by woman that man is conceived and from her that he is born ;

It is with her that he is betrothed and married ;

It is with her that he cultivates friendship, and through her keeps his race going ;

When one woman dies, another is sought for ;

It is woman again who exercises restraint upon man ;

Why call her bad from whom are born kings ?

Asa di Var thus enables us to form a fairly substantial idea about the contemporary society. In that society the strong in general tyrannised over the weak—the ruler over the ruled, the upper classes over the lower classes, the Muslims over the Hindus and man over the woman. And every sort of

tyranny and crime was committed in the name of religion which had been reduced to a solemn farce. People of that society did not, as a matter of fact, could not, think or act freely. Customs, rites, superstitious beliefs and formal practices which were necessary evils here, there and everywhere, had over-burdened the life of an individual and curbed his liberty in toto. Under such circumstances Guru Nanak appeared as a Messiah bringing with him the panacea for all the socio-religious ills. Unlike some other great spiritualists, he did not emphasise the nothingness of life; on the other hand, he had had a positive cure for ameliorating present as well as the future life of the people. He strongly decried the prevalent superstitious practices as false and meaningless, and by exhorting the individual to abandon these he not only showed him the true path of religion but also considerably lightened his burden. Hence he may be regarded as a great deliverer or liberator who tried to liberate the individual from mental and spiritual slavery he was afflicted with. At the same time the Guru, by calling upon the people to throw away all the religious and social trammels, made earnest efforts to purge and purify the society. Perhaps he wanted to build an altogether new society where there would be no place for casteism, communalism, dogmatism, idol-worship, blind superstition and exploitation of any kind, where all would worship one Formless God with the grace of Guru, and where moral virtues such as truth, love, contentment, forgiveness, mercy, modesty, compassion, love fearlessness, etc. would reign supreme.

Health and Hygiene

When you have heart burn

The burning sensation in the chest behind the sternum (chest bone) is quite a common experience specially when you have indigestion following a good evening with plenty of drinks. Those who suffer from hyperacidity or peptic ulcer are quite familiar with this name.

The term 'heart burn' is a misnomer. The stomach contains hydrochloric acid which is essential for the digestion of the food. The lining mucous membrane of the stomach is so designed that it can stand the onslaught of this strong acid, but elsewhere this acid causes damage and a burning sensation. With eructations, as in indigestion, peptic ulcer or hiatus hernia, this acid is regurgitated up in the food pipe or oesophagus. As the lining of the oesophagus is not suitable for the acid, one experiences a burning sensation along the oesophagus in the chest. This is called heart burn. Because of its location it is termed heart but it has nothing to do with the heart.

In hyperacidity, when the gastric contents regurgitate up in the mouth, one gets a sour taste and a sudden watering in the mouth; this is called 'water-brash'. Those who have highly irregular diet habits—both in the types and the time of food—suffer more from hyperacidity. Eating out at various places, at any odd-hour of the day or night, and eating very spicy, fried and oily food invites this trouble. Gall bladder diseases, liver problems, pancreatic diseases and, above all, peptic ulcers, lead to hyperacidity. In fact, peptic ulcers are caused and maintained by a high level of acid in the stomach.

There is an effective valve between the oesophagus and the stomach and the food usually cannot go back in the oesophagus when we tilt or bend. In the condition called hiatus hernia, a part of the upper end of the stomach goes into the chest and the valvular mechanism is lost. In these patients, the free to-and-fro movements of the acid contents of the stomach burn the oesophageal lining, thus causing heart burn.

Too much of running around, a fast-paced life with mental tensions and emotional upsets, etc., are known to be

closely associated with hyperacidity. We are perhaps paying a price for progress and modernisation in the form of hyperacidity and ulcers.

With the passage of time, heart burn may be associated with pain in the upper part of the abdomen. This pain typically occurs late in the night and wakes the patient in hiatus hernia. These patients feel comfortable if they prop themselves up on pillows. Gravity prevents the contents of the stomach from going up into the oesophagus. In cases of peptic ulcer, delay may cause complications associated with this disease e.g., bleeding, perforation, etc.

Patients with hyperacidity are advised to take milk or a tablet of antacid when they have heart burn. Cold milk is preferable. This kind of treatment is alright once in a while, but if the symptom persists, it should be investigated for any underlying cause, which should be then suitably treated.

If a patient of hyperacidity can regulate his eating habits by eating at regular hours and not changing food too often; he can pacify his stomach. Such a patient should avoid too much of fried, spicy and oily foods. This regulation, with bland diet and plenty of milk, may help him break the cycle and he may find relief.

Unless the symptoms persist in spite of all the precautions, a patient of hiatus hernia can live with his defective valve and can avoid a major operation. Such a patient should not bend down immediately after eating food, e.g., bending down to pick up something or tying shoe laces. They should rest propped up for some time after meals. If a patient of proved peptic ulcer does not find relief even after reasonable time of medical treatment, he should be operated to prevent complications.

Hyperacidity or heart burn is a very common symptom and can easily be avoided. Since it is an outward expression of a disease, it will not go until the cause is removed.

The International Scene

The Gorbachev Report

It was good to hear Mikhail Gorbachev report on Chernobyl. He made clear some of the human dimensions of the tragedy and cited the valor of those—including American doctors—who sought to limit its harmful effects. His televised address no doubt reassured many Soviet citizens: "The worst is behind us," he declared.

Certainly everyone must hope he is right. Mr Gorbachev's report becomes acceptable, however, only by application of a double standard that demands full disclosure in the West and gratefully welcomes even belated and partial disclosure in the East. It is not simply that he let 18 days pass. There was but the stingiest indirect acknowledgment that the Kremlin had denied not only to foreigners but also to Soviet citizens timely notice, and that it had assured the world the situation was "stabilized" even while workers were still struggling to prevent a meltdown. What he said, moreover, leaves unknown exactly what caused the accident and leaves veiled its radiation effects. Instead, he made the tiresome Soviet complaint that some in the West had sought to exploit the event—as though straight talk in Moscow would not have preempted the wild reports of which he complained.

Mr. Gorbachev offered two broad lessons of Chernobyl: that the Soviet Union must work on reactor safety on its own and that international cooperation must be deepened. Many in the West, inclined to favor international agreement in nuclear matters, have overlooked the do-it-yourself lesson, which Mr.

Gorbachev put first and pronounced "indisputable", and have seized on the cooperation theme, which he gave second and put in the "further-we-deem-it-necessary" category. He went on to endorse an international "system of prompt warning and supply of information in the event of accidents", an early conference of specialists and a strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

International cooperation is vital. But it would involve a very great wrench for Soviet policy. The Gorbachev appeal, for "prompt warning and supply of information", moreover, must be measured against the delay and censorship at Chernobyl; the call to strengthen the IAEA against the thin information Moscow has given the agency and its insistence that the agency treat that information in an approved way. The West must pursue the international approach, but with eyes open.

Mr. Gorbachev made an unforgettable reference to the "sinister force" of nuclear energy escaping control. His seriousness here, however, may be usefully measured against Soviet treatment of the person who, more perhaps than any other, represents the effort to contain this "sinister force". Andrei Sakharov is about to observe his 65th birthday, usually a time of reflection and celebration for a great man of science. He is in painful lonely exile in Gorky. It was precisely his awareness of the full spectrum of nuclear perils that made him a dissident. Nothing could better show the Kremlin's true understanding of Chernobyl than to halt his cruel persecution.

PSB Finance issue opens on Sept 29

PSB Finance and Leasing Ltd. is entering the capital market on September 29 with a public issue of 6,11,348 shares of Rs. 10 each for cash at par.

The company which became operational only from December 22, 1984 and has leasing and hire purchase especially of agricultural equipment and industrial machinery, paid a maiden dividend of 15 per cent in the very first year. It is because of prospective growth of business and enhanced capital that the board of directors are confident of paying 20 per cent dividend for the year ending February 1987.

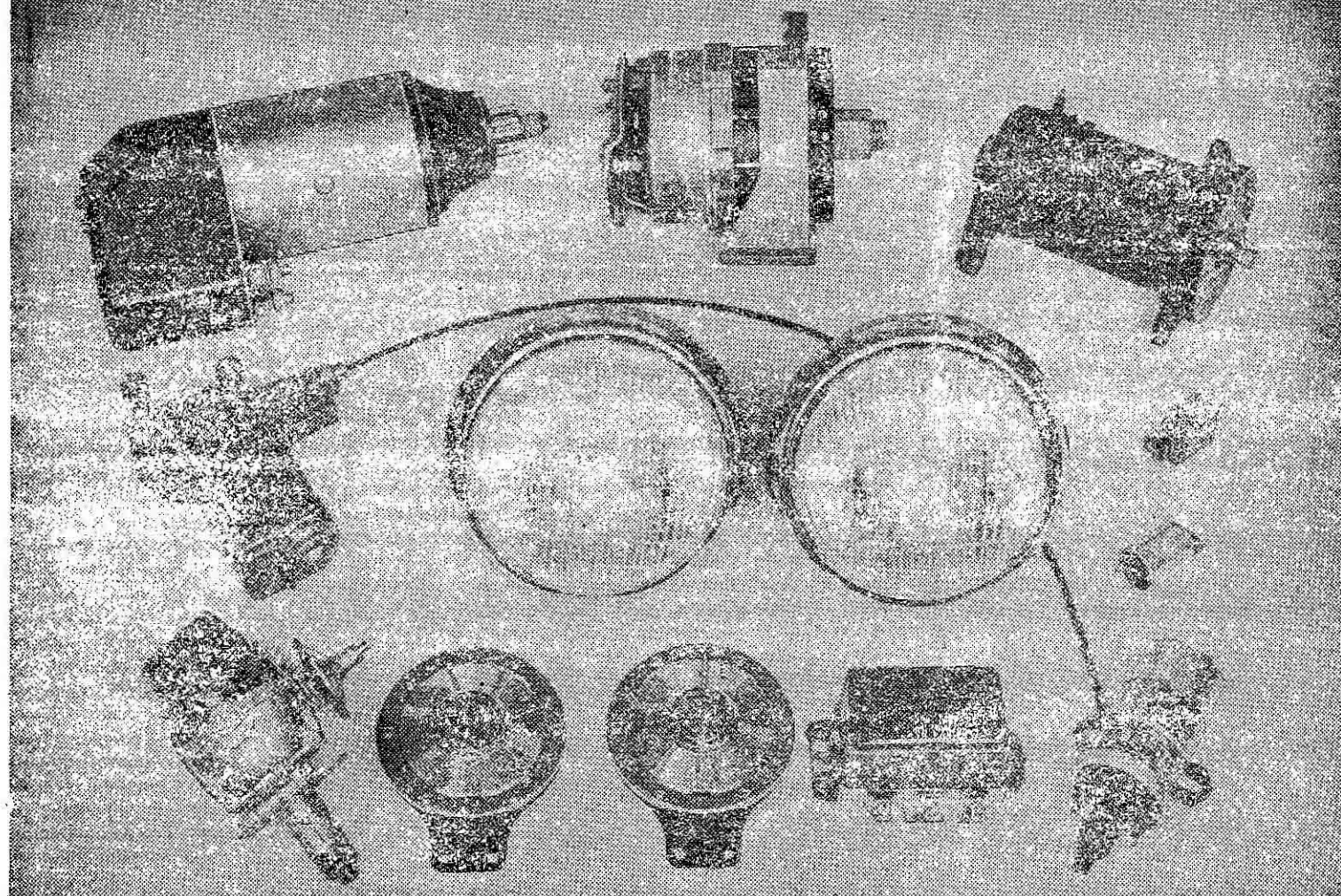
At a news conference in Chandigarh, last week, Dr. Inderjit Singh, Chairman and Managing Director of the company who held the position of Chairman-cum-Managing

Director of the Punjab and Sind Bank for a number of years, envisioned vast expansion in the business activity of the company. Against Rs. 18.71 lakh income (actual) from November 22, 1984 to February 20, 1986, its income for the end of 1986-87 is projected at Rs. 60.20 lakh.

The company's current deposits are Rs. 106 lakh and the share capital of Rs. 20.38 lakh, the deposits are due to touch Rs. 200 lakh mark next year.

The company's board of directors includes former Union Deputy Defence Minister, Mr. S.S. Majithia, who was present at the news conference, former Punjab National Bank Executive Director, Mr. D.C. Gupta, former Comptroller and Auditor-General of India, Mr. Gyan Prakash and leading legal luminary, Mr. Veda Vyasa.

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